

# A Captain In the Ranks

By...  
**GEORGE  
CARY  
EGGLESTON**

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(Continued from last Sunday)

## CHAPTER II.

THE young man rode long and late that night. His way lay always upward toward the crests of the high mountains of the Blue Ridge range.

The roads he traversed were scarcely more than trails, too steep in their ascent to have been traveled by wagons that might wear them into thoroughfares. During the many hours of his riding he saw no sign of human habitation anywhere and no prospect of finding food for himself or his horse, though both were famishing.

About midnight, however, he came upon a bit of wild pasture land on a steep mountain side, where his horse at least might crop the early grass of the spring. There he halted, removed his saddle and bridle and turned the animal loose, saying:

"Poor beast! You will not stray far away. There's half an acre of grass here, with bare rocks all around it. Your appetite will be leashed enough to keep you from wandering."

Then the young man—no longer a captain now, but a destitute, starving wanderer on the face of the earth—threw himself upon a carpet of pine needles in a little clump of timber, made a pillow of his saddle, drew the saddle blanket over his shoulders to keep out the night chill, loosened his belt and straightway fell asleep.

Before doing so, however, faint with hunger as he was and weary to the verge of collapse, he had a little ceremony to perform, and he performed it in answer to a sentimental fancy. With the point of his sword he found an earth bank free of rock and dug a trench there. In it he placed his sword in its scabbard and with its belt and sword knot attached. Then, drawing the earth over it and stamping it down, he said:

"That ends the soldier chapter of my life. I must turn to the work of peace now. I have no fireplace over which to hang the trusty blade. It is better to bury it here in the mountains, in the midst of desolation, and forever to forget all that it suggests."

When he awoke in the morning a soaking, persistent, pitiless rain was falling. The young man's clothing was so completely saturated that as he stood erect the water streamed from his elbows, and he felt it trickling down his body and his legs.

"This is a pretty good substitute for a bath," he thought as he removed his garments and with strong, nervous hands wrung the water out of them as laundresses do with linen.

He had no means of kindling a fire, and there was no time for that at any rate. Guilford Duncan had begun to feel the pangs not of mere hunger, but of actual starvation—the pains that mean collapse and speedy death. He knew that he must find food for himself, and that quickly. Otherwise he must die there, helpless and alone, on the desolate mountain side.

He might, indeed, kill his horse and live for a few days upon its flesh until it should spoil. But such relief would be only a postponing of the end, and without the horse he doubted that he could travel far toward that western land which he had half unwittingly fixed upon as his goal.

He was well up in the mountains now and near the crest of the great range. The valley lay beyond, and he well knew that he would find no food supplies in that region when he should come to cross it. Sheridan had done a perfect work of war there, so devastating one of the most fruitful regions on all God's earth that in picturesque words he had said, "The crow that flies over the valley of Virginia must carry his rations with him."

In the high mountains matters were not much better. There had been no battling up there in the land of the sky, but the scars and the desolation of war were manifest even upon mountain sides and mountain tops.

For four years the men who dwelt in the rude log cabins of that frost-bitten and sterile region had been serving as volunteers in the army, fighting for a cause which was none of theirs and which they did not at all understand or try to understand. They fought upon instinct alone. It had always been the custom of the mountain dwellers to shoulder their guns and go into the thick of every fray which seemed to them in any way to threaten their native land. They went blindly, they fought desperately, and they endured manfully. Ignorant, illiterate, abjectly poor, inured to hardship through generations, they asked no questions the answers to which they could not understand. It was enough for them to know that their native land was invaded by an armed foe. Whenever that occurred they were ready to meet force with force and to do their humble mightiest to drive that foe away or to destroy him without asking even who he was.

During the absence of four years their homes had fallen into fearful desolation. Those homes were log cabins, clinked and daubed, mostly having earthen floors and chimneys built of

sticks thickly plastered with mud. But, humble as they were, they were homes, and they held the wives and children whom these men loved.

The little mountain homesteads had been spared devastation. But in war it is not "the enemy" alone who lays waste. Such little cribs and granaries and smokehouses as these poor mountain dwellers owned had been despoiled of their stores to feed the armies in the field. Their boys, even those as young as fourteen, had been drawn into the army. Their hogs, their sheep, the few milk cows they possessed, had been taken away from them. Their scanty oxen had been converted into army beef, and those of them who owned a horse or a mule had been compelled to surrender the animal for military use, receiving in return only Confederate treasury notes, now worth no more than so much of waste paper.

Nevertheless Guilford Duncan perfectly understood that he must look to the impoverished people of the high mountains for a food supply in this his sore extremity. Therefore, instead of crossing the range by way of any of the main traveled passes, he pushed his grass refreshed steed straight up Mount Pleasant to its topmost heights. There, about noon, he came upon a lonely cabin whose owner had reached home from the war only a day or two earlier.

There was an air of desolation and decay about the place; but, knowing the ways of the mountaineers, the young man did not despair of securing some food there, for even when the mountaineer is most prosperous his fences are apt to be down, his roof out of repair and all his surroundings to wear the look of abandonment and despair.

Duncan began by asking for dinner for himself and horse, and the response was what he expected in that land of poverty stricken but always generous hospitality.

"Ain't got much to offer you, cap'n," said the owner, "but such as it is you're welcome."

Meanwhile he had given the horse a dozen ears of corn, saying:

"Reckon 'twon't hurt him. He don't look 's if he'd been a feedin' all too hearty, an' I reckon a dozen ears won't founder him."

For dinner there were a scanty piece of bacon, boiled with wild mustard plants for greens, and some pones of corn bread.

To Guilford Duncan in his starving condition this seemed a veritable feast. The eating of it so far refreshed him that he cheerfully answered all the questions put to him by his shirt-sleeved host.

It is a tradition in Virginia that nobody can ask so many questions as a Yankee, and yet there was never a people so insistently given to asking questions of a purely and impertinently personal character as were the Virginians of anything less than the higher and gentler class. They questioned a guest not so much because of any idle curiosity concerning his affairs as because of a friendly desire to manifest interest in him and in what might concern him.

"What mount your name be, cap'n?" the host began as they sat at dinner.

"My name is Guilford Duncan," replied the young man. "But I am not a captain now. I'm only a very poor young man—greatly poorer than you are, for at least you own a home and a



Duncan began by asking for dinner for himself and horse.

little piece of the mountain top, while I own no lach of God's earth or anything else except my horse, my four pistols, my saddle and bridle and the clothes I wear."

"What's your plan—goin' to settle in the mountings? They say there'll be big money in 'stillin' whisky an' not a-payin' of the high tax on it. It's a risky business, or will be when the Yanks get themselves settled down into possession, like, but I kin see you're game fer risks, an' ef you want a workin' partner I'm your man. There's a water power just a little way down the mountin in a valley that one good man with a rifle kin defend."

"Thank you for your offer," answered Duncan. "But I'm not thinking of

settling in the mountains. I'm going to the west if I can get there. Now, to do that I must cross the valley, and I must have some provisions. Can you sell me a side of bacon, a little bag of meal and a little salt?"

"What kin you pay with, mister?" "Well, I have no money, of course, except worthless Confederate paper, but I have two pairs of Colt's 'navy six' revolvers, and I'd be glad to give you one pair of them for my dinner, my horse's feed and the provisions I have mentioned."

"Now look a-here, mister," broke in the mountaineer, rising and straightening himself to his full height of six feet four, "when you come to my door you was mighty hungry. You axed for a dinner an' a hoss feed, an' I've done give 'em to you free, gratis an' fer nothin'. No man on the face o' God's yearth kin say as how he ever come to Si Watkins' house in need of a dinner an' a hoss feed 'bout a gittin' both. An' no man kin say as how Si Watkins ever took a cent o' pay fer a entertainin' of angels unawares, as the preachers says. But when it comes to furnishin' you with a side o' bacon an' some meal an' salt, that's more different. That's business. There's mighty little meal an' mighty few sides o' bacon in these here parts, but I don't mind a-tellin' you as how my wife's done managed to hide a few sides o' bacon an' a little meal from the fellers what come up here to collect the tax in kind. Ef you choose to take one o' them sides o' bacon an' a little meal an' salt an' give me one o' your pistols, I'm quite agreeable. The gun mout come in handy when I git a little still a-goin' down there in the hollow."

"I'll do better than that," answered Duncan. "I'll give you a pair of the pistols, as I said."

"Hold on! Go a leetle slow, mister, an' don't forget nothin'. You promised to gimme the pair o' pistols fer the bacon an' meal an' salt an' fer yer dinner an' hoss feed. I've done tole you as how Si Watkins don't never take no pay fer a dinner an' hoss feed, so you can't offer me the pair o' pistols 'bout offerin' to pay fer yer entertainment o' man an' beast, an' I won't have that, I tell you."

"Very well," said Duncan. "I didn't mean that. I'll give you one of the pistols in payment for the supply o' provisions. That will end the business part of the matter. Now, I'm going to do something else with the other pistol—the mate of that one."

With that he opened his pocketknife and scratched on the silver mounting of the pistol butt the legend: "To Si Watkins, in memory of a visit. From Guilford Duncan, Cairo, Ill."

Then, handing the inscribed weapon to his host, he said:

"I have a right to make you a little present, purely in the way of friendship, and not as 'pay' for anything at all. I want to give you this pistol, and I want you to keep it. I don't know where I am going to live and work in the west, and I don't know why I wrote 'Cairo, Ill.' as my address. It simply came to me to do it. Perhaps it's a good omen. Anyhow I shall go to Cairo, and if I leave there I'll arrange to have my letters forwarded to me wherever I may be, so if you're in trouble at any time you can write to me at Cairo. I am as poor as you are now—yes, poorer—but I don't mean to stay poor. If you're in trouble at any time I'll do my best to see you through, just as you have seen me through this time."

(Continued next week)

## The Diplomat.



Alan (to his sister, who is worrying him to be allowed to play horse)—No, Flo. But I'll tell you what—you stay where you are and be the horse in the stable.—Punch.

## Needed a Subject.

Mother—What do you mean by pushing your baby brother down that flight of stairs?

Dorothy—Why, mamma, I'st just joined the society for the first aid to the injured, at school, and I wants a subject to practice on.—New York Life.

## The Humor of the Unabridged.

Gladys—Mrs. Lakeside was idly glancing through her dictionary the other day when a humorous circumstance struck her forcibly.

Grace—And what was that?

Gladys—She found that "divorce" came before "marriage."—Judge.

## Her Business Head.

"Do you think your father will ever forgive you for eloping?" asked the frightened bridegroom.

"Do I?" said the bride. "Well, I guess yes. He promised me \$500 extra if I'd save the fuss of a big wedding!"—Detroit Free Press.

## OUR FASHION LETTER

The Bolero Jacket is Once More Restored to Favor.

## WORN WITH PRINCESS GOWNS

Some Interesting Details of Modish Footwear—Sunshades That Lend Beauty and Expression to Plain Faces Are a Bon Indeed.

A useful fan for the theater has a tiny electric lamp set in the handle, making it easy to read the programme, though the lights in the house are dim. Large handkerchiefs are being used in Paris and have found their way over here into the wardrobe of smart



PRINCESS COSTUME.

women. These handkerchiefs have elaborately embroidered corners done in delicate shades of cotton.

There is a new hatpin with a head exactly resembling a raspberry formed of a cluster of mock rubies.

Hand bags to match summer gowns are now shown in the shops made of all over embroidery with pink, blue or green tints beneath. There are, too, dainty bags of embroidered white linen with belts to match.

When a sleeve is made with a long cuff of lace it is pretty to line the lace with chiffon, as it makes the arm look much whiter underneath. The same rule applies to a lace yoke.

Women with large waists should wear a girdle that is straight at the bottom in the back and shaped at the top.

Eccu linen makes this charming princess corselet costume. The bolero jacket is formed almost entirely of insertions of heavy ecru lace. The chemise and sleeve puffs are of white all over embroidered swiss.

## SOME MINOR CONSIDERATIONS.

New stockings show designs of floral embroidery worked in the natural colors.

Long black silk knitted gloves are newer and smarter than the silk weaves we have known. These gloves come in all the different lengths required by the modish short sleeves. On the back of the hand is an openwork design. The twelve button length costs \$1.50.

Everybody knows how it wears out the shoe ribbon to be constantly tying



GIRL'S LEIGHORN HAT.

and untie it. Now there is a new tie for the low shoe which does not

need to be tied in order to fasten it. You slip it through the eyelet and it fastens with a little catch.

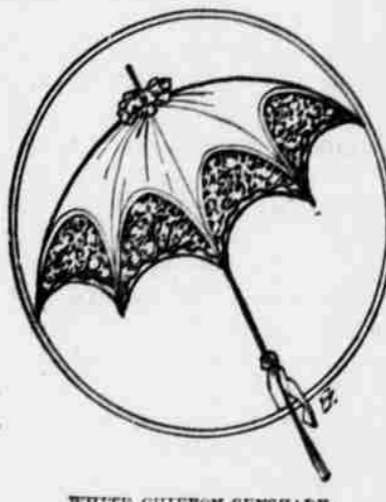
The polonaise has conquered. It has followed closely upon the princess gown and bids fair to equal it in popularity.

Touche of gold and black used together are a new note on costumes. There is an effort to push soft, heavy surah silk for street wear. Foulard has again been brought into fashionable favor.

The hat in the cut is a pretty girl's affair in leghorn. About the crown is a twist of pink silk which finishes in a rosette at one side. One huge pink rose and its foliage ornament the crown, and a pale pink paradise plume tops the whole confection.

## IN SUNSHINE AND SHADE.

The array of parasols this season is simply irresistible. The dainty, flirtatious sort seems to be in the majority, for there are few plain sunshades in evidence in the shops. One can pay



WHITE CHIFFON SUNSHADE.

anywhere, moderately speaking, from a hundred dollars to a modest sum to own one of these novelties.

Linen parasols are just as modish as they were last year, and, as one fashion paper expresses it, "the girl with nothing a year can have pretty and practical covers of this kind for the cost of the stamped linen and a few hours' work on an embroidered design."

Some of the daintiest parasols shown are of white "all over" embroidery on cotton, the sort that is used for guimpes. A delightful example is built of wide flouncing of embroidered batiste, the edges ruffled with valenciennes lace. Valenciennes motifs are introduced through the embroidery. The stick is a light bamboo color mounted in carved ivory with gold bands.

(Continued on page 2)

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